

Appl. No. 10/722,157

Attorney Docket No. 81863.0024

Amdt. Dated January 22, 2007

Customer No.: 26021

Reply to Final Office Action of August 22, 2006 and Advisory Action of December 21, 2006

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Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently amended) The A method of manufacturing piezoelectric ceramics ~~according to claim 12~~ comprising the steps of:

disposing a green compact comprising a piezoelectric ceramic powder on a supporting member whose surface has porosity of 5% or less and flatness 20 μ m or less; and

firing the green compact while contacting with the surface of the supporting member, wherein the green compact comprising a piezoelectric ceramic powder of a perovskite compound containing Pb is fired while being inserted into a sealed space, which satisfies the relations represented by the following expressions (1) and (2):

$$1.0001 \times (V2 + V3) \leq V1 \leq 4.0000 \times (V2 + V3) \quad (1)$$

$$0.02 \times V3 \leq V2 \leq 50 \times V3 \quad (2)$$

where V1 denotes a volume of a sealed space, V2 denotes a volume of a supporting member and V3 denotes a volume of a green compact, when a supporting member having surface roughness Ra of 1 μ m or less, flatness of 20 μ m or less and a volume V2 is placed on the green compact having a volume V3 and they are inserted into the sealed space having a volume V1.

14-31. (Canceled)